

# South Dakota Character Education



SD DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

January, 2004

“ I am not always bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not always bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have.”

Abraham Lincoln

## WEB SITE:

This is just kind of a fun web site. Right as you enter this site you can see how the United States has expanded from the 1650's to the 20th century. It is a helpful tool to see how state borders have moved around so frequently .

<http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~stephan/48states.html>



## INSPIRING STUDENTS (from an article in the “Eleven Principles Sourcebook”)

Historical role models can help students form an emotional desire to be a good person. In Building Character in Schools, Ryan and Bohlin write:

We should tell those tales that capture the forgotten stories of human courage: the story told in **Giants of the Earth** of the Norwegian farmer Per Hansa and his family, who struggled to survive in the 1880s and 1890s against incredible odds; or the story of Jane Addams, who gave her life to the poor and miserable of Chicago's slums; or of Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave with a huge price on her head who returned again and again to the slave states to lead her people to freedom.

Fictional characters can strike a chord as much or more than in real-life exemplars, often lingering in our memories because we have had the benefit of seeing the inner workings of the characters' hearts and minds. Thinking of integrity may bring to

mind Atticus Finch in **To Kill A Mockingbird**; caring may suggest Charlotte in **Charlotte's Web**. These tales challenge us to reach higher, to be better people.

For many children, their heroes are close to home—a parents, an aunt or uncle, a sibling, a coach or teacher. In studying heroes, it is helpful to have students focus on behaviors and characteristics that they most admire. It is important to emphasize that nobody is perfect, that we are all works in progress, thus making it less likely that children will “reject the good” when heroes make poor decision..

A few other suggested books:

1. **The Bobbin Girl** by McCully—a

historical tale based on events in the 1800s where a girl stands up for workers rights.

2. **John Blair and the Great Hinkley Fire** by Nobisso is an historical account of how a man remained steadfast and helped others in a firestorm on a train.
3. **Night and the Candle Maker** by Somary tells of how a man keeps the fire of life burning despite his fears.
4. **Hank Aaron, Brave in Every Way** by Golenbock—Aaron's bravery in the face of racist threats.
5. **Grandpa's Corner Store** by De-Salvos-Ryan—his granddaughter saves his store.
6. **Whitewash** by Shange—friends stick together to help victim.

## “We Are All Related”

A resource named “We Are All Related” has been developed in South Dakota for K-12th grade educators and other adults working with youth. There are over 80 developmentally appropriate lessons that tie traditional Lakota, Dakota and Nakota values to the Six Pillars of Character advocated by the Character Counts program.

If you are interested in finding out more about this resource you may contact Kari Fruechte, SDSU Brookings, 605-688-4946.

[Fruechte.kari@ces.sdstate.edu](mailto:Fruechte.kari@ces.sdstate.edu).

Ms. Fruechte is the State Director for Character Counts.

Kari and Valerian Three Irons are presenting a program describing this resource at a workshop at the 4-H Building at the Todd County Fair Grounds in Mission, SD on Friday, February 20, 2004. The workshop is from 9:00-3:30 and costs \$35. The price includes breaks, lunch, and presentation materials. If you are interested in registering for this workshop contact [marilyn\\_eighmy@sdstate.edu](mailto:marilyn_eighmy@sdstate.edu) or 605-688-4110.

## CHARACTER EDUCATION CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

July 8,9, 2004

Ramkota Convention Center,  
Pierre, SD  
College credit offered

### Keynote speakers:

Hal Urban  
Deb Austin Brown

Breakouts by representatives of districts who have good news to share about their character education efforts, and other presentations with emphasis on character education.

SEE YOU THERE!

## SD DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## WE ARE ON THE WEB:

[www.state.sd.us/deca/CSCF/CEP/](http://www.state.sd.us/deca/CSCF/CEP/)

- Current newsletter
- Resources and other links
- Student opportunities
- Professional development

## THE SD PARTNERSHIPS:

The South Dakota Character Education Partnership grant was received during the summer of 2001. The goals for the grant are:

- To establish high quality character education implementation sites that embrace the virtues that are embodied in SD Code, as well as other character traits identified by the local community, in a manner which effectively models the principles of good character through the actions of school staff and students.
- To develop the lifelong skills and ethical behaviors necessary to be contributing citizens in a democratic society by integrating character education practices within the total school and community.
- To effectively link existing local, state and federal resources that merge effective school research and character development in a caring community.
- To maintain or improve student academic achievement while expanding student understanding of, commitment to, and action upon core ethical values.

Contact people for the 10 partnership districts:

Brookings: Kathy Miller – [Kathy.Miller@k12.sd.us](mailto:Kathy.Miller@k12.sd.us)

Flandreau: Dawn Olson – [olsond@flandreau.k12.sd.us](mailto:olsond@flandreau.k12.sd.us)

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Spearfish: Kathy Hood – [khoo.adminpo@spearfish.k12.sd.us](mailto:khoo.adminpo@spearfish.k12.sd.us)

Watertown: Lori Redlinger – [lredlinger@wtm.k12.sd.us](mailto:lredlinger@wtm.k12.sd.us)

West Central: Rhonda Fredrick – [Rhonda.Frederick@k12.sd.us](mailto:Rhonda.Frederick@k12.sd.us)

### Ideas that work:

A colleague of mine in the DOE (Janet Ricketts) told me about a successful project she did as a high school English teacher relating to heroes. She had her high school students go down and interview kindergarten students and find out a lot about their lives. Each student then returned to the classroom and wrote a story about their kindergartner in which that young child was the hero or heroine. After the stories were in a completed state, they went back to the kindergarten

classroom and each read their story to the whole kindergarten class. It was a great experience for all concerned. Besides having a meaningful and fun writing experience for the high school students, the kindergartners had a great experience spending time with an older student. The stories that resulted from this project made reading come alive for the little ones and gave a sense of accomplishment on many fronts to the high school English students.



“Life’s most  
persistent and  
urgent  
question is,  
“What are you  
doing for  
others?”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE KITS AVAILABLE

The Federal Office of Solid Waste has announced the availability of *Make a Difference* Kits. The kits are collections of outreach products designed to encourage students in grades 7-12 to make a difference by:

- Learning about the environment impacts of products they use in their everyday lives.
- Initiating school or community reuse and recycling programs.
- Finding and participating in environmental volunteer and service-learning opportunities and
- Pursuing environmental careers.

<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/mad.htm>